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Country and intercountry programming and projects

COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR THE COMOROS

UNDP assistance requested by the Government of the Comoros for the period January 1979-December 1981

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ADB	African Development Bank
CADER	Centre to Support Rural Development
CEFADER	Federal Centre to Support Rural Development
EDF	European Development Fund
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	Gross domestic product
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ILO	International Labour Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPF	Indicative planning figure
LDC	Least developed country
OPE	Office for Projects Execution
OPAS	Operational assistance
SMF	Special Measures Fund
TCP	Technical co-operation programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

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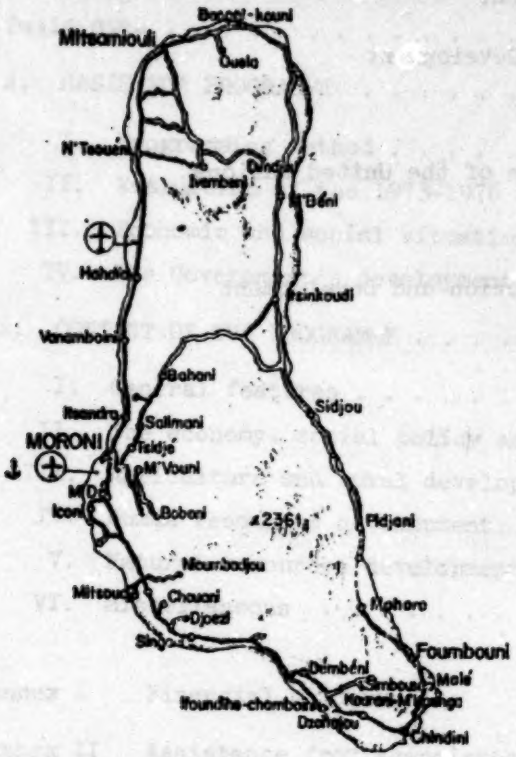

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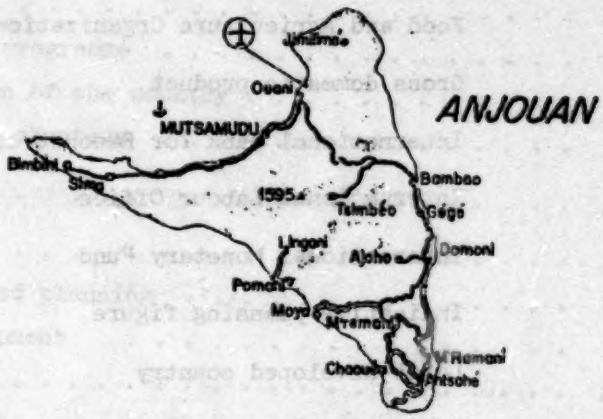

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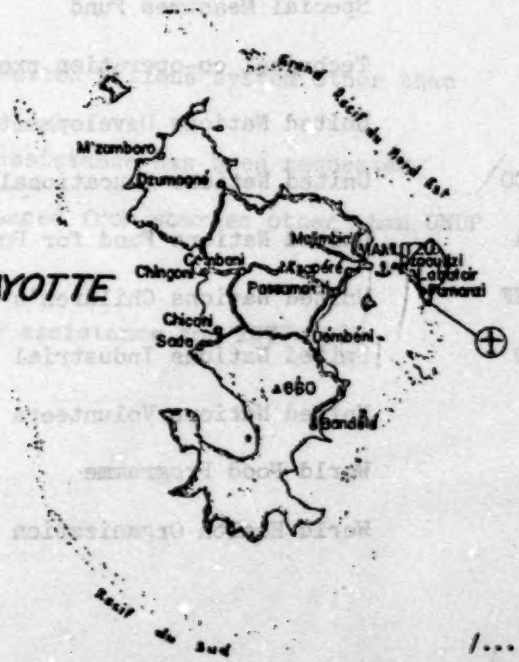

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Basic data

Geographical situation

The archipelago of the Comoros is a group of four islands of volcanic origin situated half-way between the east coast of Africa and Madagascar at the northern end of the Mozambique Channel.

	TOTAL	Grande Comore	Anjouan	Mohéli	Mayotte
Surface km^2	2,235	1,147	424	290	347
Population (1976)	344,000	164,000	121,000	13,000	46,000

Population density: 154 per km^2 (1976); 331 per arable km^2

Population growth rate: 2.6 per annum (estimated)

School enrolment for the school year 1978/79:

Primary: 49,940 pupils

Secondary: 8,932 pupils

Literacy rate: 20 per cent of the population

GDP per capita: $190 (1978 estimates)

Balance of trade:

	IMPORTS		EXPORTS	
Year	Metric tons	Value in thousands of CFA francs	Metric tons	Value in thousands of CFA francs
1976	40,776	3,118,604	6,304	2,223,696
1977	39,812	4,053,235	2,099	2,202,883
1978	45,429	4,905,961	3,500	2,099,199

Government revenue and expenditure in 1977 (in millions of CFAF):

Total current revenue: 1,606.9

Total current expenditures: 2,597.5

Current account deficit: 990.5

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A. BASIS FOR PROGRAMME

I. Programming method

1. This document is the first attempt by the Federal and Islamic Republic of the Comoros to programme UNDP assistance over several years and covers the period 1 January 1979 to 31 December 1981.

2. The period to which the programme relates falls in the second programming cycle of UNDP. The final version of the programme encountered difficulties because of the numerous political upheavals which have occurred in the Comoros during recent years. These include the partition of the island of Mayotte, the termination of technical and financial assistance by the former administering Power in 1975, two changes of régime and, above all, the destruction of the archives and the dismantling of the civil service in 1977. Accordingly, the new Government, engrossed in the immediate task of restructuring the political and administrative framework of the country, has not until now been in a position to deal with the programming of assistance funded by UNDP.

3. The fact that this document is being submitted during the second half of the 1977-1981 programming cycle bears witness to the Government's determination to increase the effectiveness of UNDP assistance by maximizing the usefulness of the various projects under way and in the process of being approved within the framework of a carefully thought-out programme prepared with due attention to concentration of resources and coherence of objectives. The evaluation of UNDP assistance during the period 1973-1978 and the note by the Resident Representative concerning the country programme served as the starting-point for this programme.

4. The programming method used in this exercise consisted, firstly, of identifying, together with the substantive ministries, the priority problems and needs in each economic sector and subsector. Subsequently, the note by the Resident Representative was discussed in the Council of Ministers with a view to drawing up a set of priorities in the areas of UNDP assistance. In that connexion mention should be made of the fact that during a general review conducted under the auspices of the Ministry of Finance, the Economy and Planning, in which the Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Regional Bureau for Africa participated, intersectoral priorities were set in the light of UNDP's financial capacity and the aid expected from other bilateral and multilateral programmes. A joint effort was thus made to ensure that UNDP assistance was integrated with an over-all foreign assistance policy.

5. Furthermore, account was taken of the sectoral studies prepared by FAO, UNESCO and UNIDO and of the reports of experts, consultants and various missions of international agencies.

6. In order to make the country programme as effective as possible, a specific "programme-approach" methodology was adopted whereby activities and projects were identified in the context of all efforts under way - or to be undertaken - so as to permit the working out of a co-ordinated programme of interdependent and complementary activities designed to make the best use of technical co-operation.

7. Although the Government has not yet worked out a development plan, it has already made certain choices and decided on the guidelines for and principal directions of its future policy in the main sectors: agriculture and rural development, strengthening of the planning structures, education and health, transport and communications, and vocational training. Preparation of the economic and social development plan of the Comoros must obviously be preceded by the establishment of the necessary structures, the creation of conditions conducive to implementation of the plan and a retrospective assessment of the present situation.

8. The allocations from UNDP resources specially earmarked for the least developed countries (LDC allocations), which currently amount to $269,000, have not been taken into consideration in the financial summary (annex I).

9. This document also contains, in annex IV, a list of technical assistance and/or preinvestment projects which do not form part of the programme itself but for which UNDP assistance is requested in finding other sources of financing.

10. In view of General Assembly resolution 32/92 of 13 December 1977, which recommended that there should be a special programme of assistance for the Comoros, the Government can expect that the funds allocated to it will be more in keeping with its needs.

11. An inflation factor of the order of 8 per cent annually has been applied to the cost of the various inputs.

12. Because of the state of advancement of the projects and the delay in programming UNDP assistance, no reserve has been set aside.

13. The programmed resources have been distributed according to identified needs and the socio-economic situation of each island (see annex VI).

II. Evaluation of the 1973-1976 programme

14. It is clear from an evaluation of the UNDP programme during the period 1973-1978 that a multitude of small-scale projects were carried out in priority sectors such as agriculture, fishing, stock-raising and economic planning. These projects related mainly to fact-finding and feasibility studies.

15. It is also clear from an evaluation of the assistance previously provided by UNDP that, in many cases, important proposals and recommendations made in various studies have not been acted upon. For example, two fact-finding missions carried out in 1973 and 1974 resulted in the recommending of two projects relating to small-scale and industrial fishing projects respectively. Despite the potential importance of fishing to the country's economy, these recommendations have not come to anything because of a lack of financing.

16. Furthermore, it should be pointed out that the projects were not interrelated and did not form part of an over-all development strategy. The main characteristic

of UNDP assistance to the Comoros was that it was designed to meet isolated and fragmented needs and failed to provide any links between sectors. It can be said that, on the whole, the completed projects were not planned in a satisfactory manner.

17. The effect of this lack of a development plan was felt not only at the sectoral level but also at the level of the distribution of IPF funds. For example, although 90 per cent of the population is rural, only a small share of UNDP funds has been allocated to rural areas.

18. Because in the past Government services were not properly equipped to carry out planning, it was not possible to assess the technical assistance and preinvestment needs. Accordingly, because the sectoral and intersectoral analyses were not more detailed, a failure to create linkages between the various activities during that period was inevitable.

19. Aside from the difficulties referred to in paragraph 2, there is also the fact that the Comoros is an island country, that its land territory is not continuous, and that approximately 15,000 Comorians were repatriated following the events in Majunga, Madagascar, in 1977. These factors have made planning and programming even more difficult.

20. For the above-mentioned reasons, the assistance granted in the past by UNDP has not, on the whole, been of much help for the preparation of this programme. Nevertheless, the feasibility study for the Nioumakélé road project has made it possible to find other sources of assistance and financing for the construction of secondary roads in that very disadvantaged region of the Comoros.

III. Economic and social situation of the country

21. Gross domestic product. Provisional estimates indicate that in 1974 the GDP reached a peak of $71 million following an annual growth of approximately 6 to 7 per cent during the five preceding years. As a result of the events that accompanied the country's accession to independence the GDP declined by 13 per cent in 1975 and by 9 per cent in 1976. Because of rapid population growth (taking into account net immigration) per capita GDP rose by only 2 to 3 per cent annually between 1970 and 1974. After exceeding $200 in 1974, it fell back to $184 in 1976 (at current prices). In 1977, owing to the repatriation of a large number of Comorians from Madagascar, per capita income fell to an estimated $160.

22. The fast growth rate of the early 1970s was achieved because of the very high investment rate (in the neighbourhood of 30 per cent of the GDP). Investment necessarily declined in 1975 and 1976; however, public investment rose in 1977 to $8.2 million as a result of cutbacks in the budget.

23. It is not possible as yet to prepare estimates for 1978 on the basis of the available data. But it is believed that per capita income has increased appreciably owing to Government action and the repercussions of external assistance on the economic and financial sector.

24. Export crops. The Comoros is essentially an agricultural country. Agriculture accounts for almost 40 per cent of the GDP and for nearly all the export earnings. Efforts at diversifying production and at industrialization have been hampered by the lack of natural resources and the inadequate economic and population base. Economic development is minimal: there are only a few small factories which have found large enough markets to justify their existence. The Comoros is dependent on the world prices of its main export crops and on demand for its commodities (vanilla, cloves, essential oils and copra).

25. Balance of payments. The Comoros concentrates on cash crops and is heavily dependent on the outside world for the satisfaction of its needs. Its foreign trade relies on the export of plant products and the import of consumer and capital goods. Its trade balance shows a large deficit. In 1976 the coverage rate of imports was only 71 per cent and in 1977 the figure dropped to 54 per cent. In 1978, imports rose in terms of volume and value and, as the prices of the local products exported failed to keep pace, the coverage rate of imports further dipped to 42 per cent; this resulted in a deterioration of the terms of trade.

26. Money supply. By the end of 1978 the money supply had exceeded the level it reached at the end of 1976. It was approximately 37 per cent greater than at the end of 1977.

27. Price index. According to World Bank estimates, the cost-of-living index for the period 1972-1975 shows a fairly close link between increases in the cost of living and increases in the prices of imports. The cost-of-living index rose from 63 in 1972 to 67 in 1973, 88 in 1974 and 100 in 1975.

28. Physical infrastructure. The Comoros does not have the physical infrastructure which is needed for speedy development. The road network, in particular, is totally inadequate. Road improvement is a prerequisite for agricultural development; accordingly, there is an urgent need to build a network of feeder roads so as to encourage the marketing of locally grown foodstuffs.

29. Public finances. The country is going through a serious budgetary crisis, which has been further exacerbated by the assumption of responsibility for the services previously financed by the former administering Power. The Treasury accounts were closed in 1977 with a deficit of 767 million CFA francs; this would have been higher but for an amount of approximately 9 million CFAF provided through external assistance. The budget drawn up for the period 1 July 1978 onwards and confined to essential expenditure showed a deficit of 48 per cent, which was covered by external resources.

30. Population problems. The Government is drawing up a policy designed to tackle the crucial problem of population growth and the pressure this is putting on agricultural land and forest resources. If the current trends continue, the population will grow to 560,000 in 1990 and to 800,000 by the end of the century.

31. Health services. Health services are rudimentary in the extreme. In 1976, there was only one qualified doctor for every 40,000 persons. There are only two hospitals (one on Grande Comore, the other on Anjouan), five medical centres with a total of 663 beds, and 45 rural health stations.

32. Education. All children attend Koranic schools until they have learnt to read classical Arabic. Only half of all school-age children attend primary school and fewer than 20 per cent enter secondary school. School enrolment did, however, increase greatly between 1970 and 1975.

IV. The Government's development strategy

33. The three major constraints are:

(1) The country's small size (2,235 km^2);

(2) The relatively high population density and the fact that the population is growing at a rate of over 2.6 per cent; and

(3) Communications difficulties.

34. Owing to the lack of services and statistics required to measure and analyse the socio-economic situation, the approach to development problems is necessarily somewhat unscientific. It is nonetheless true that most of the activities undertaken or envisaged so far have been obvious choices because of the pressing nature of the situation.

35. Pending completion of the Government's intensive efforts to establish a structure for the planning and management of development, a number of essential objectives have been selected, attainment of which is a prerequisite for any development planning.

36. At the national level, in the economic and social sectors, these objectives may be summarized as follows:

37. Agriculture and rural development

(a) Self-sufficiency with regard to food

Diversification and expansion of food production in order to reduce food imports;

Development of the production of small livestock and non-industrial fishing in order to reduce the shortage of animal protein.

(b) Qualitative and quantitative improvement of exports

Rationalization of agricultural methods through guidance and extension on a national scale at the level of producers;

Selection of more productive and better adapted species;

Increased plant health control;

Increase in plantations.

(c) Promotion of industrial fishing

38. Transport and telecommunications

(a) A rational road network

Constructing on each island a circular road and then a traversal network to provide access to agricultural areas and develop the interior.

(b) Strengthening of inter-island communications and trade

Augmentation of the national maritime fleet by the acquisition of one or two units assigned permanently to inter-island communications;

The restructuring of Air Comores and the acquisition of two aircraft for inter-island and regional communications.

(c) Improvement of maritime and air communications

Regular stops at regional transshipment ports by Comorian vessels;

Negotiations with foreign air and shipping companies for the inclusion of the Comoros on their regular lines to the Indian Ocean.

(d) Renovation and improvement of the telecommunications network

Improvement, modernization and extension of exchanges and the aerial and underground network;

Establishment of a complete inter-island and intra-island communications network by micro-wave links;

Increasing the capacity and ease of overseas communications.

39. Political, social and economic planning

(a) Development plan

The training of technicians and professional personnel in the disciplines concerned;

The establishment of services for the collection and analysis of data on the socio-economic situation;

Reorganization and consolidation of the structures of the Directorate-General for Planning.

(b) Administration

A study for a more streamlined and more efficient administrative structure adapted to the State's financial resources.

(c) Professional personnel

Promotion of a policy for in-service training and retraining of existing professional personnel;

The allocation of scholarships for higher education in accordance with future needs and subject to commitment to serve the State for at least 10 years.

40. Mass health: promotion of a mass health policy and an intensive network of health stations for effective preventive medicine.

41. Population: large-scale action to reduce the population growth rate.

42. Education and training: reform to ensure education that is more closely related to the country's economic potential; creation of technical education systems in accordance with medium-term development needs.

43. At the regional level, the objectives are:

(a) Communications: participation in all activities conducive to the establishment of regional communications or telecommunications networks, with a

view to closer links of all kinds between the countries of the Indian Ocean and East Africa.

(b) Trade: promotion of a policy oriented towards freer movement of persons from one country to another and the establishment of a preferential trade area.

B. CONTENT OF THE PROGRAMME

I. General features

44. The country programme as submitted reflects the Government's view regarding optimal utilization of UNDP assistance for national development. UNDP assistance has been concentrated on strategic sectors, i.e., on those areas where it can act as a catalyst and offer advantages over other sources of assistance owing, first, to the unique character of the United Nations system and, secondly, to the actual needs of the Comoros. Three key ideas form the basis, namely:

Assistance in politically sensitive areas;

A determination to be self-sufficient in food;

Strengthening of planning services.

45. Using these three key ideas as a starting-point, the Government has endeavoured:

To elaborate large, well-structured projects rather than a less cohesive set of small projects;

To launch new activities that will assist the least privileged classes;

To concentrate action on top-priority areas that can produce tangible results.

46. The emphasis of the programme has therefore been placed on agriculture and rural development, on the strengthening of social and economic planning services, on the development of human resources and, through specific activities, on the elimination of certain obstacles which hinder the development process.

47. In accordance with the priorities set, the new projects envisaged for 1979 onwards, relate more specifically to all aspects of planning and to food production, support for rural development, forestry and pasture development on the high plateaux, water resources and Habitat.

48. The distribution of resources by sector is as follows:

(1)	Agriculture and rural development	40.03 per cent
(2)	The economy, social policy and planning	18.36 per cent
(3)	Development of human resources	15.23 per cent
(4)	Development of natural resources	4.48 per cent
(5)	Miscellaneous (Habitat, UNV programme, etc.)	21.90 per cent

49. A special effort has been made in the elaboration of projects to ensure the best possible use of available resources. In that effort, the Government has adopted certain of the principles set forth in the "New dimensions for technical co-operation" defined by the UNDP Governing Council. Accordingly:

UNDP inputs constitute the essential minimum for ensuring the proper functioning of the projects, taking into account all the other inputs which can be made available by the Government or from other assistance;

Taking into account the fact that the Comoros is one of the least developed countries, attention has been paid in preparing the budget for the UNDP contribution to ensuring the provision of the necessary resources for the ongoing operation of the projects, and the necessary equipment, where the Government is not able to cover these costs;

An effort has been made to reduce the cost of the "international personnel" component to the minimum by utilizing, as far as possible, United Nations Volunteers and associate experts.

50. In the field of investment, UNDP assistance in preinvestment studies will be called upon to play a major role in the following projects:

Strengthening the education sector:

Rural development in Nioumakélé;

Road project in Nioumakélé;

Feasibility study on the use of geothermal energy.

51. Under the current programme, 19 per cent of the funds programmed relate to terminated projects (annex I). The balance is intended for ongoing projects and new projects expected to become operational in 1980.

52. The Government has endeavoured to programme UNDP aid taking account of the estimated ceilings. Nevertheless, in view of the urgency of most of the new projects envisaged and the volume of material and equipment to be supplied by

UNDP, 1980 will probably be a turning-point in which the programme, which has been bogged down for so long, will really take off.

II. The economy, social policy and planning

53. As an overseas territory of France before independence, the Comoros was integrated in the French planning system. Consequently, a series of five-year plans were prepared which followed the planning cycle adopted in France. These plans were scarcely more than a summary of the Government's development policy and the investement programme for the duration of the plan and did not include any macro-economic analysis. Nor did they provide sufficient details of the investment programme. They merely gave a brief description of the projects, the costs of which were not correctly evaluated, without any indication of the skilled manpower required for their execution.

54. The withdrawal of the technical and financial assistance of the former administering Power after independence greatly reduced the capacity of the planning apparatus.

55. After independence, or, more precisely, in February 1978, an interim five-year plan for the period 1978-1982 was issued. Although many of the projects it contains are of economic significance and undeniable potential economic viability, this document should not really be regarded as a valid development plan, since it does not indicate specifically the available or potential resources for its implementation.

56. Moreover, as both the political and the institutional circumstances have changed, a new plan must be drawn up as soon as possible embodying the policies and objectives of the present Government and indicating the projects proposed for achieving the declared objectives. The Government firmly intends to prepare a pragmatic plan specifying the activities and the financial and skilled manpower resources necessary for its implementation.

UNDP assistance

57. Less than one year after the start of a "Planning aid" project (COI/76/001), the previous Government requested the cancellation of that project, which, in its view, was premature in view of the total lack of basic data to serve as a point of departure for the planning apparatus and the lack of adequately qualified personnel to serve as national counterparts.

58. In order that the present Government's development strategy can be formulated within the framework of coherent planning and this planning translated into actual achievement, the Comorian administration must be able to make optimal use of national resources and external aid inputs. Accordingly, it is essential to create a structure for the expert management of development planning.

59. UNDP assistance is, by its nature, suitable for use in politically sensitive fields and aims, in particular, at promoting self-reliance. Accordingly, the Government is requesting UNDP to finance a project designed to strengthen the planning capacity of the Directorate-General for Planning.

Project requested:

COI/78/004 - Management and planning of development

Objectives:

(a) Support for the Directorate-General for Planning in the conception and organization of development planning;

(b) Strengthening of the planning structure;

(c) Identification and evaluation of development objectives and programmes with a view to the compilation of a reference document for use in the elaboration of the development plan;

(d) The preparation of project files for submission to the various sources of financing.

UNDP input:	$730,000	Current programme
	$400,000	Next programme
Total	$1,130,000	

60. Realistic planning requires valid statistical data on each sector of activity. The Government does not at present have any qualified statisticians, and no collection of statistical data is carried out on a practical basis. It is therefore urgently necessary to obtain technical assistance in this area.

Project requested:

COI/79/020 - Central Directorate of Statistics

Objectives:

(a) To collect statistics on customs matters, manpower, transport, education, health, etc., systematically for each island;

(b) To prepare a programme for the collection of data essential for planning.

Planned UNDP input: 1980-1981	$230,000	Current programme
	$430,000	Next programme
Total	$660,000	

61. One of the most important of the new tasks assigned to the Directorate for Planning is the optimal use, co-ordination and evaluation of external aid. For that purpose, the Government is requesting UNDP assistance in obtaining the services of an OPAS expert and a United Nations Volunteer. /...

Project requested:

COI/79/021 - Co-ordination of external aid

Objectives:

(a) Rational co-ordination of external aid;

(b) Supervision of the execution of projects financed from such funds.

Planned UNDP input:	1980	$108,000	Current programme
	1982	$15,000	Next programme
	Total	$123,000	

62. Because of the decentralizing character of the Constitution, which provides for a number of decision-making authorities, administrative restructuring at the level of each of the islands is essential in order to define, on the one hand, the functions and responsibilities of the governorates and, on the other, those of the various ministries and services of the Federal Government.

Projects requested:

COI/79/022 - Administrative management and methods

Objectives:

(a) To adjust the machinery for co-ordination between the islands and the Federal Government;

(b) To define the functions of the various governmental authorities;

(c) To recommend appropriate procedures;

(d) To restructure semi-public companies.

Planned UNDP input:	1981	$50,000	Current programme
	1982	$80,000	Next programme
	Total	$130,000	

COI/79/025 - Adviser on foreign trade and pricing policy

Objectives: In view of the complexity of the problems relating to trade, the Government urges UNDP to make available to it an expert adviser on the subject in order to assist the Government in international negotiations affecting the countries of the third world and, in particular, the least developed countries;

The expert is also to help the Government in drawing up a new pricing policy.

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Planned UNDP input:	1980-1981	$48,000	Current programme
	1982	$90,000	Next programme
	Total	$138,000	

COI/79/016 - Identification of manpower needs

Objectives: The planned development of all economic sectors requires skilled manpower adapted to the country's needs. In order to achieve this, the identification of manpower needs is especially urgent, as was emphasized by the UNDP/ILO/UNIDO mission of November 1978.

In order to enable the Government to formulate an employment policy on the real needs of the country, the Government is requesting UNDP assistance in obtaining the services of an employment planning consultant.

Planned UNDP input: 1979-1980 $68,000

III. Agriculture and rural development

63. The economy of the Comoros still bears the imprint of its colonial past, i.e., it is oriented towards cash crops for export. In addition to being small in size, an island country and without known mineral resources, the Comoros must contend with other obstacles to its development, namely:

A limited area of agricultural land (less than 50 per cent of the total);

Deforestation and, in some areas, large-scale erosion due to heavy population concentration on the farmland. Some 90 per cent of the inhabitants of the archipelago eke out a livelihood from agriculture;

A lack of water, particularly acute on Grande Comore;

Under-exploitation of some agricultural land;

Extremely low productivity of food crops and unsatisfactory yield of export crops

Poorly organized stock-raising;

Excessive devastation of the forest, which upsets the ecological balance; the soil is no longer adequately protected, and the water regulation system is disturbed;

Archaic techniques in the fishing sector; with the available equipment, catches are just large enough to feed the population of the coastal area;

An inadequate network of roads; it may be noted that the existing roads mainly serve the cash crop plantations for the collection of their produce and its transport to the ports and airports. A number of villages in the high plateaux are currently still totally isolated;

There is no satisfactory system of market prices for producers; and this results in a lack of incentive for any substantial and lasting increase in production;

There is no agricultural credit system; the level of vocational training is low; and there is no ongoing and effective system for providing guidance.

64. In spite of these many handicaps, there are genuine possibilities for development, since there are potentials which need only to be exploited rationally, with due regard to the technical and socio-economic situation of the population of the archipelago.

65. Taking account of such obstacles and pending the elaboration of a development plan, the Government of the Comoros regards the following rural development objectives as having absolute priority:

Self-reliance with regard to food;

The development of export crops;

Full employment.

66. In order to attain these objectives, the Government has approved the following measures:

The introduction of better crop-raising techniques and improvement of traditional crops;

The organization of a system for providing guidance and extension services;

Making available to farmers a credit system that will enable them to acquire agricultural inputs (fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides, seed, farm equipment);

The development of cattle-breeding and small-livestock farming (chickens and rabbits) in order to reduce meat imports from abroad and thereby help to adjust the balance of payments, which shows a large deficit.

67. In order to enable it to impart a new impetus to the agricultural sector, which is of fundamental importance for the country's economy, the Government has requested UNDP to devote to this sector a large portion of the IPF made available to the Comoros. UNDP has responded to this appeal by allocating 40 per cent of the IPF for the period 1977-1981 to agriculture and rural development.

68. In addition to activities already completed - such as project COI/77/003: "Agro-pedological maps", such maps being an irreplaceable working tool for any agricultural activity, project COI/74/003: "Small-scale fishing mission", and project COI/78/013: "Reafforestation pilot campaign" - assistance in the following sectors is proposed for the years 1979-1981:

(a) Rural development

69. The goal of rural development is to improve the economic and social living conditions of farmers and their families. At the same time, it should result in an over-all improvement in the national economy. While it is important to envisage long-term programmes of action, immediate action should certainly not be ruled out.

70. It is essential that the Comoros should acquire, as soon as possible, an efficient agricultural infrastructure that can provide producers with the technical and logistic guidance they need for the initiation of radical action to improve their living conditions. Such an infrastructure is a prerequisite for all the specific production activities currently being prepared or envisaged for the future.

71. Since the revival of the agricultural sector hinges on production and extension services, the Government is currently reorganizing these services completely, taking into account the federative nature and the internal autonomy of each of the islands, as embodied in the Constitution.

72. The new infrastructure for rural development is being established at two levels:

At the federal level, where the funds for microplanning, the budgetary appropriations, basic research, special training in animal and plant quarantine, inter alia, will be administered by the Federal Centre to Support Rural Development (CEFADER);

At the island level, where activities in support of development, co-ordinated by Government services, will be conducted from the Centres to Support Rural Development (CADERs), whose range of action will gradually be extended to all the agricultural areas of the country.

Project requested:

COI/79/004 - Support to the rural development programme (phase I)

Objectives: To improve and supplement the training of instructors: refresher courses, fellowships, continuing training, etc.;

To provide the full range of necessary logistic facilities: buildings and equipment, means of transportation and communications;

To provide operational support: programming, budgetary appropriations, supplies, plants, livestock, etc.

Planned UNDP input: 1979-1981 $2,321,400

73. In the same context, because of the especially critical conditions in the Nioumakélé peninsula, on the island of Anjouan, a separate rural development project has been requested for Nioumakélé.

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Project requested:

COI/78/002 - Integrated rural development of Nioumakélé (phase 1)

Objectives: To prepare, in co-operation with the Government and other potential donors, a basic plan of action for the integrated development of Nioumakélé.

Planned UNDP input: 1979-1980 $100,000

(b) Stock-raising

74. There is a shortage of meat in the Comoros. Imports of beef are growing each year: approximately 750 metric tons were imported in 1976, nearly 1,000 metric tons in 1977, and 1,200 metric tons in 1978. The cattle raised by local farmers have a low meat yield, and their number has declined considerably.

75. Yet on Grande Comore and Mohéli, at elevations above 600 or 700 metres, there are large expanses of unused or little-used land which could be developed for stock-raising.

Project requested:

COI/79/018 - Forestry and pasture development on the high plateaux of the Comoros with a view to their use for stock-raising

Objectives: To make the Sangani ranch operational again, as a pilot project;

On the basis of data on the ranch and supplementary studies, to conduct a feasibility study for all such pasture regions;

To conserve the natural resources and vegetation cover of the high plateaux in order to reduce the risk of erosion;

To produce firewood and timber for the domestic market through the balanced development of forests and pastureland in order to achieve maximum productivity.

Planned UNDP input: 1980-1981 $235,000 Current programme

1982-1983 $650,000 Next programme

Total $885,000

(c) Fishing

76. One of the foremost priorities for the Comorian authorities is the development of fishing in order to meet the population's protein needs.

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77. Only small-scale fishing is currently practised in the Comoros; there is no industrial fishing. The boats used are light outrigger canoes.

78. A considerable amount of aid to this sector was recently obtained from the African Development Bank (ADB). The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has released $80,000 from the funds for its technical co-operation programme for a feasibility study.

79. Until such time as these large-scale activities are under way, the Government has asked UNDP to approve a project which, although small, promises to have a considerable impact on the supply of fish to local markets.

Project requested

COI/79/014 - Repair of 10 vessels belonging to the Maritime Fishing Service

Objective: To repair 10 motor launches belonging to the Maritime Fishing Service and out of order for more than a year, so that they can tow canoes to fishing areas and ensure the safety of fishermen.

Planned UNDP input: 1979 $14,000

(d) Training

80. Agricultural development depends on the number and, in particular, on the skills of the staff responsible for it. Thus, the Comoros must have specially trained personnel in order to develop agricultural production which is the only economic resource of the country.

81. At present, its complement of personnel comprises 16 specialists - 10 agronomists, one specialist in animal husbandry, three in forestry, one in agricultural economics and one in tropical agronomy - and 33 drivers. There are no specialists in the field of fishing. This is clearly not enough to shoulder present responsibilities, not to mention those that will arise from the execution of the projects planned, in particular the establishment and operation of the Centres to Support Rural Development (CADERs) and the development of stock-raising and forestry.

82. The Government is therefore determined to spare no effort to train the new staff needed, at the planning stages, for the rural development of the country. Such training is to be provided in animal husbandry, fishing, rural engineering and forestry. In addition, technical and vocational in-service refresher courses will be organized for existing staff.

Project requested:

COI/79/019 - Training of staff for agricultural planning

Objectives: To train young people who have completed their secondary education to become: animal husbandry specialists, veterinarians, fishing specialists, agricultural engineers, refrigeration engineers, water and forestry engineers;

To retrain existing staff, in particular: two agronomists, one specialist in agricultural processing, and one in plant protection.

Planned UNDP input: 1981 $ 40,000 Current programme

1982-83 $400,000 Next programme

Total $440,000

83. The needs of the Comoros are immense as regards agriculture and rural development. UNDP is capable of meeting only a small part of those needs because of the modest financial resources available, and thus it is important to find other sources of outside aid. The African Development Bank, the World Bank and the European Development Fund have already expressed a keen interest in this vital sector. It will be essential to co-ordinate all such efforts in order to use them in the best interests of the country.

IV. Human resources development

A. Education

84. The troubled history of the Comoros in recent years, which was mentioned earlier, has caused frequent disruptions in educational enrolment at all levels. Moreover, it has proved impossible to follow up interesting educational initiatives designed to reform the educational system and to provide training and advanced training for teachers. As for the Ministry of Education, its administration was dismantled. Accordingly, the Government has decided to restore order and to reorganize entirely the educational system and the facilities for young people as part of a national plan for economic and social development.

85. At the request of the Government, a study of the educational sector, financed by UNDP, was undertaken by UNESCO in consultation with the World Bank and in close co-operation with the relevant national authorities. The study was conducted in January and February of 1979.

86. After closely examining the educational system, the mission noted the following shortcomings:

(a) Administration and planning of education

The structural inadequacy of the Ministry of Education;

The shortage of qualified staff;

The lack of any manning table;

The failure to integrate educational planning into the national development strategy;

School curricula unsuited to the needs of the country.

(b) General education

The fact that courses at every level and in every type of instruction are unsuited to the social and economic context;

The insufficient preparation of the majority of teachers;

The fact that establishments are under-equipped and existing educational material is inadequate;

The lack of technical and educational support for teachers;

The inadequacy or lack of maintenance of premises.

(c) School construction and furnishings

The complete absence of toilet facilities for pupils and teachers alike; the lack of storage space for teaching material in existing primary schools, and hence their inability to function properly;

A shortage of school buildings, especially for primary education; only 33 per cent of primary schools are equipped to provide a complete course of primary education;

Too many imported materials used in school construction, which is thus becoming very expensive;

The need for repair work in most schools due to the lack of maintenance;

The complete absence of national standards for the construction of schools;

Conventional-type furniture (table and bench) which is poorly suited to contemporary educational needs;

The failure to turn surrounding space into school grounds.

87. Mindful of the shortcomings of its educational system as well as of the school infrastructure, the Government has expressed the earnest desire that United Nations experts should be sent to the Comoros as soon as possible in order to help find suitable solutions to three of the most pressing problems:

The administration and planning of education;

School curricula and their development;

Infrastructure.

Project requested

COI/79/011 - Strengthening of the educational sector

Objectives: (a) Administration and planning of education

To establish administrative structures in the Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Education, Youth and Sport (educational sector) and to organize a macro-planning and micro-planning unit, supported by a data collection and processing system;

To study alternatives for establishing an educational system;

To prepare preinvestment studies.

(b) Technical support for education

To help the Government to establish a National Institute of Education.

(c) School construction and furnishings

To set up a section specializing in school construction and furnishings.

Planned UNDP input: 1979-1981 $516,025

B. Vocational training

88. The labour situation in the Comoros is characterized by a large mass of unskilled labourers and workers, many of whom are illiterate, by a small proportion of skilled workers and employees and by an almost total lack of organized vocational training.

89. In order to correct this situation, in 1973 the Territorial Government requested UNDP assistance for the implementation and development of a vocational training system which, in conjunction with traditional instruction, would provide technical training for workers, improve their skills, and thus meet the requirements of the job market.

90. UNDP assistance in this subsector comprises the following project:

COI/73/005 - Development of vocational training

Objectives: To set up a national institute for training in a variety of occupations;

To assist enterprises or industrial sectors in which the need for training, advanced training or enhanced skills becomes apparent;

To institute a technical documentation service.

UNDP input: 1977-1981 $578,828 Previous programme $479,920

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V. Natural resources development

(a) Water development

91. Although the archipelago has abundant rainfall (generally more than 2,000 mm a year), it suffers from a shortage of water, particularly on Grande Comore. The soil on that island is so permeable that runoff is limited to gullies, especially in heavy rains.

92. At present, two types of water resources are exploited.

Rainfall, which is collected in cisterns; and

Fresh groundwater, which is drawn from only a few aquifers along the coast.

93. The coastal wells currently in operation often give brackish water, while the water in the cisterns (there is one in good repair for every 15 inhabitants) is likely to be contaminated; this explains the widespread incidence of intestinal parasitic diseases and the high rate of infant mortality.

94. For a short time now, the town of Moroni, on Grande Comore, and nine neighbouring villages have been supplied by an aquifer with a flow of 17 cubic metres of water an hour, but this is the only instance of such water resources development. The hope is that this flow can be maintained and that salinization of the aquifer will not occur. Some studies recently begun, but not yet fully elaborated, strongly suggest that several parts of the country have fresh water aquifers that may be easily tapped.

95. Under the circumstances, it is not yet possible to set medium-term and long-term quantitative objectives for the planning and co-ordination of research at the national level or for the utilization of water resources. However, pending the elaboration of a clearly defined strategy, the Government has asked for UNDP assistance in its effort to acquire an adequate basic knowledge, primarily, of ground water and, to a lesser extent, of surface water, with a view to the preparation of a strategy for the exploitation of the archipelago's water resources.

Project requested

COI/79/005 - Water exploration and development

Objectives: Drilling of a number of wells in order to test known potential. Such work will be conducted as part of a programme to increase the existing supply of drinking water;

Preparation of a report on the supply of drinking water to Mitsamiouli and surrounding areas by means of wells;

Preparation of a water exploration programme for the country as a whole;

Assessment of groundwater resources, primarily on the island of Grande Comore;

Formulation of general guidelines for the establishment of a water plan for each island, covering a period of 20 years.

Planned UNDP input: 1980-1981 $317,000

(b) Non-conventional sources of energy

96. The energy crisis has also affected the Comoros, which is experiencing ever-growing difficulties in obtaining fuel supplies to meet domestic needs.

97. In the hope of reducing the total dependence on external sources, the Government has asked UNDP for assistance in planning and assessing the cost of a geophysical survey to select sites for test drilling, with a view to the development of geothermal energy.

Project requested

COI/79/003 - Mission: geothermal resources consultant

Objectives: To prepare a report on the specifications of a geophysical survey in the Comoros and draw up cost estimates.

Planned UNDP input: 1979 $4,500

VI. Miscellaneous

98. The arrival of international staff foreseen in connexion with the various new projects included in the programme calls for proposals for facilities to house them. Housing poses an acute problem in the Comoros in general, and in Moroni, the capital, in particular. Private-sector housing is in extremely short supply and what little government accommodation there is has mostly already been allocated. The Government therefore believes that the country's ability to utilize the various kinds of assistance provided depends, first and foremost, on the construction of such facilities.

99. With UNDP agreement, it has therefore been decided to set aside a sum of $590,000 from the IPF to launch an emergency programme to build 12 housing units for United Nations staff. The project director and associate expert to be recruited for the Habitat project will, in addition to supervising the construction of United Nations housing, be responsible for the supervision of the other construction work to be undertaken under the aegis of the United Nations. They will also help set up a national unit with responsibility for handling all problems relating to Habitat and the development of human settlements in both urban and rural areas.

Project requested:

COI/79/009 - Habitat and housing for United Nations experts

Objectives: To organize and supervise the construction of 12 housing units for United Nations experts funded from the IPF;
To establish a national unit to solve problems of town-planning and Habitat.

Planned UNDP contribution: 1979-1981 $842,000

100. As explained in chapter I ("General features"), in order to maximize available UNDP resources, the Government has tried, wherever possible, to use associate experts or United Nations volunteers in place of experts.

101. A vast UNV project has thus been set up. So far, it has proved to be both dynamic and extremely effective in supporting all the activities undertaken in the programme in general and in the health and education sectors in particular.

Project requested:

COI/78/014 - UNV programme in the Comoros

Objectives: To provide support for the country's various socio-economic sectors, more especially in the fields of health and education.

Planned UNDP contribution: 1978-1981 $348,000

102. As a result of the dismantling of the civil service and the destruction of documentation and records during the previous régime, the Government is at present encountering very serious difficulties in collecting taxes.

103. According to World Bank estimates, almost 20 per cent of taxes due go uncollected, while tax evasion is estimated at some 25 per cent of the tax base.

104. Consequently, the Government has requested UNDP assistance to obtain a very senior expert under the OPAS programme to review the whole issue and to improve the effectiveness of the tax-collection machinery.

Project requested:

COI/79/023 - Income tax

Objectives: To use an OPAS expert to make an analysis of the tax problem in the Comoros and, at the same time, to improve the effectiveness of the tax-collection machinery.

Planned UNDP contribution:	1980-1981	$108,000	Current programme
	1982	$ 15,000	Next programme
	Total	$123,000	

105. In short, this country programme, the first to be submitted to UNDP, represents a considerable effort on the part of the Government to channel the assistance it receives towards development options which truly meet the country's needs, avoiding dispersal and fragmentation as far as possible.

106. Given the still rudimentary infrastructures of national administration, it was not possible at this time to envisage projects which it would be the direct responsibility of the Government to execute, in accordance with the "New dimensions".

107. Large-scale provision has been made for the use of United Nations Volunteers because experience has clearly shown that the services provided by UNV meet the country's needs in every respect. There are plans to develop this programme in the future.

108. Unfortunately, it has proved impossible to broaden regional co-operation because of political factors which have placed a curb on such activities. The Government expects to gain some benefit from the regional co-operation programme planned in the context of special assistance to island countries.

109. Experience of technical co-operation among developing countries has been given practical expression through the programme of volunteers, many of whom are from the third world, as well as through more modest activities in small-scale industry.

110. The Government is also fully aware of the role that women have to play in the socio-economic recovery of the Comoros, and programmes are already being planned to involve women more closely in the development of the country in general, and of the rural areas in particular.

ANNEX I

Financial summary

I. Programming resources

	$US
1. Available resources	
(a) IPF (1977-1981)	7 200 000
Total programming resources	7 200 000

II. Use of resources

1. Programming (all sectors)	
(a) Completed projects (1977-1981)	1 388 000
(b) Ongoing and new projects included in the programme	5 812 000
2. Reserve	-
Total programmed resources	7 200 000

III. Sectoral breakdown by year of programme expenditure (1977-1981)

(in United States dollars)

SECTOR	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	TOTAL
1. The economy, social policy and planning	32 000	35 000	121 000	488 000	646 000	1 322 000
2. Agriculture and rural development	16 000	112 000	714 000	1 337 000	703 000	2 882 000
3. Human resources development	444 000	137 000	123 000	235 000	158 000	1 097 000
4. Natural resources development	-	-	5 000	250 000	67 000	322 000
5. Miscellaneous	122 000	90 000	202 000	939 000	224 000	1 577 000
TOTAL	614 000	374 000	1 165 000	3 249 000	1 798 000	7 200 000

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ANNEX II

Assistance from agencies of the United Nations system other than UNDP for 1977-1981

	$US
1. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)	
Transport and communications	
Road repair project	5 000 000
2. World Food Programme (WFP)	
Nutrition	
Road building and repair; rural activities; food programmes for schools and hospitals	1 925 300
Education and health assistance 1/	1 065 000
"Food for work": rural and agricultural development 2/	
Total	2 990 300
3. World Health Organization (WHO)	
Health	
General health services	1 642 000
Fellowships	295 000
Promotion of environmental health	50 000
Total	1 987 000
4. United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA)	
Health	
Development of basic health services Upgrading of maternity clinics Development of mother-and-child statistics	1 103 500
Population	
Population census	358 500
Total	1 462 000
5. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	
Establishment of a National Documentation and Research Centre in the Comoros	25 000
Equipment for the collection and cataloguing of oral traditions	10 000
Total	35 000

1/ Provision has been made for a supplementary allocation in 1981.

2/ Undetermined sum.

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	$US
6. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	
Education	
Assistance with education reform	362 900
School materials and teacher training and retraining	172 000
Upgrading of Koranic schools	60 000
Training of peasant women	60 000
Educational broadcasting	66 500
Health	
Assistance to the Paramedical Training Centre	104 600
Basic health	230 000
Repair of water tanks	60 000
Nutrition	
Maize production and promotion of small-livestock-raising	166 500
Work, Selection, Employment, Technology	
Activities for women and appropriate technology	60 000
Miscellaneous, and allocations planned	130 500
Total	1 473 000
7. United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)	
Industry	
Feasibility study for cement plant	35 000
Training course on the preparation and evaluation of industrial projects	36 000
Technical adviser for industrial projects	38 000
Salt production	39 600
Total	148 600
8. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	
Relief assistance	
Financial contribution for people repatriated from Madagascar	101 200
9. International Monetary Fund (IMF)	
Administration and economy	
Taxation and banking consultants	not available

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ANNEX III

List of projects for which UNDP assistance has been requested
(estimated UNDP inputs in thousands of United States dollars: 1977-1981)

Activities by sector	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	TOTAL	1982-86
THE ECONOMY, SOCIAL POLICY, PLANNING							
(a) Completed projects							
COI/74/004 - Statistics	(5)					(5)	
COI/75/003 - Programming mission	1	-	6	-	-	7	
COI/76/001 - Development planning	36	-	-	-	-	36	
COI/78/008 - FAO programming mission	-	35	-	-	-	35	
Subtotal	32	35	6	-	-	73	
(b) Ongoing and new projects							
COI/78/004 - Development management and planning	-	-	80	300	350	730	400
COI/79/016 - Manpower needs	-	-	30	38	-	68	
COI/79/017 - UNCDF mission	-	-	5	10	-	15	
COI/79/020 - Statistical Centre management	-	-	-	100	130	230	430
COI/79/021 - Foreign aid co-ordination	-	-	-	40	68	108	15
COI/79/022 - Administrative management and methods	-	-	-	-	50	50	80
COI/79/025 - Foreign trade	-	-	-	-	48	48	90
Subtotal			115	488	646	1 249	1 015
Total for sector	32	35	121	488	646	1 322	1 015
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT							
(a) Completed projects							
COI/74/003 - Small-scale fishing	9	-	-	-	-	9	-
COI/77/003 - Agro-pedological maps	-	72	36	-	-	108	-
COI/77/005 - Agricultural extension	7	34	-	-	-	41	-
COI/78/010 - Assistance to Ministry of Production	-	-	7	-	-	7	-
COI/78/013 - Reafforestation	-	6	1	-	-	7	-
Subtotal	16	112	44	-	-	172	
(b) Ongoing and new projects							
COI/78/002 - Rural development Hiounakfié	-	-	26	74	-	100	
COI/79/004 - Rural development	-	-	630	1 228	463	2 321	
COI/79/014 - Launch repairs	-	-	14	-	-	14	
COI/79/018 - Development of high plateaux	-	-	-	35	200	235	650
COI/79/019 - Agricultural training	-	-	-	-	40	40	400
Subtotal	-	-	670	1 337	703	2 710	1 050
Total for sector	16	112	714	1 337	703	2 882	1 050

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Activities by sector	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	TOTAL	1982-86
HUMAN RESOURCES							
(a) Completed projects							
COI/73/005 - Vocational training	444	135	-	-	-	579	-
COI/77/001 - Education mission	-	2	-	-	-	2	
Subtotal	444	137	-	-	-	581	-
(b) Ongoing and new projects							
COI/79/011 - Strengthening of education sector	-	-	123	235	158	516	-
Subtotal	-	-	123	235	158	516	
Total for sector	444	137	123	235	158	1 097	-
NATURAL RESOURCES							
(a) Ongoing and new projects							
COI/79/003 - Geothermal energy mission	-	-	5	-	-	5	-
COI/79/005 - Water resources	-	-	-	250	67	317	-
Subtotal			5	250	67	322	
Total for sector	-	-	5	250	67	322	-
MISCELLANEOUS							
(a) Completed projects							
COI/77/004 - Nioumaké road project	122	19	-	-	-	141	
COI/77/007 - Electronics engineer	-	62	31	-	-	93	
COI/78/009 - Meteorological fellowships	-	6	-	-	-	6	
Subtotal	122	87	31	-	-	240	
(b) Ongoing and new projects							
COI/78/014 - UNV programme	-	2	103	193	50	348	
COI/78/016 - Fellowship: social worker	-	1	6	6	6	19	
COI/79/009 - United Nations housing units and Habitat	-	-	42	700	100	842	12
COI/79/015 - Seminar on Habitat	-	-	20	-	-	20	
COI/79/023 - Income tax	-	-	-	40	68	108	15
Subtotal	-	3	171	939	224	1 337	27
Total for sector	122	90	202	939	224	1 577	27
Grand total	614	374	1 165	3 249	1 798	7 200	2 092

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ANNEX IV

Proposals for projects to be financed from sources other than UNDP

Project title	Estimated cost
I. Agriculture and rural development	
Creation of pilot rice-growing area on Mohéli	27,000
Integrated crop pest control: research and development	130,000
Development of aviculture	230,000
Development of apiculture	100,000
Support to Water and Forestry Service	650,000
Protection and development of a mountain basin in the Nioumakélé region	150,000
Nutritional information for trained personnel	75,000
Organization of activities for women	7,500
Establishment of an Agricultural Documentation Centre	7,500
Establishment of an Agricultural Engineering Service	560,000
II. Industry	
Use of solar energy to distil ylang-ylang	to be determined
Establishment of a plant for manufacturing agricultural implements	to be determined
Assistance to the Ministry of Production and Agro-industries	to be determined
Manufacture of edible oils and detergents	to be determined
Installation of a maize mill	to be determined
III. Education and vocational training	
Strengthening of Ouani Vocational Training Centre	$600,000
Development of craft trades in the Comoros	to be determined
Training and advanced training of office staff	to be determined
Development and institutionalization of labour inspectorate	to be determined
Assistance with social security	to be determined
Assistance for youth	to be determined
IV. Infrastructure, science and technology	
Strengthening of the Meteorological Service	$628,000
Planning of a telecommunications network	to be determined

N.B. These projects were recommended following visits by expert and/or consultant missions from the United Nations system

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ANNEX V

Utilization of SMF/LDC funds

Available resources at 31 December 1979	$269 000
Projected utilization:	
COI/78/012 - Construction of water storage tanks	$131 500
COI/79/024 - Programme support	$137 000
Total	$269 000

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ANNEX VI

Geographical distribution of UNDP assistance for 1977-1981

		$US
A. Federally		2 376 000
B. Regionally		
Grande Comore	2 514 000	
Anjouan	1 795 000	
Mohéli	515 000	
		4 824 000
Total		7 200 000